

*SICKNESS comfortable, and a
DYING BED easy. 3*

A
SERMON

At the FUNERAL of
Mrs. FRANCES LOBB,

Late WIFE of the Reverend

Theophilus Lobb, M. D.

DELIVERED at

Chelmsford, Nov. 28, 1722.

By *JOHN GREENE.*

Now publish'd (with some Enlargement) at the
Request of the *Ministers, the Relations, and Others,*
who heard it.

Attended with a POEM on the Occasion.

*The Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of Languishing. Thou
wilt make all his Bed in his Sickness, Psalm xli. 3.*

O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory!
1 Cor. xv. 55.

L O N D O N:

Printed for R. FORD, at the Angel in the Poultry,
near Stocks Market. MDCCXXIII. (Price 6 d.)

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STICKERS COMPANY, and a
LIVING BOOK

SERMON

AT THE FUNERAL OF

MR. FRANCES LOBB

First of the Year

Theophilus Epps, A.D.

PRINTED BY

Chelmsford 1773



BY JOHN

Now printed and sold by the Author, at the
Sign of the Anchor, in the Strand, near the
Westminster Abbey.

Attended with a POEM on the Occasion.

The last great Sermon, and the last of a long
and useful Ministry, of the late
O. T. Epps, D.D. of the University of
Oxford, who died on the 27th of
1773.

LONDON

Printed by R. D. in the Strand, near the
Westminster Abbey.

To my Dear and Reverend Brother

Doctor Theophilus Lobb.

THERE is something so uncommon in the Account the following Discourse gives of that truly pious Person, whose Decease we are lamenting, not only in Your Opinion, whose great Affection to Her might be suppos'd to bias You in its Favour; but also in the Thoughts of the other worthy Ministers who heard it, that I easily complied with Their, and Your Desire, of making it publick; in hopes of its being of as much Service to many others, into whose Hands it might fall, as it was to those who first receiv'd it from the Pulpit. And I think my self the more oblig'd to this, because it can no otherwise be communicated to several of her Relations and Acquaintance, and particularly those about Yeovil, among whom she had spent a great Part of her Life; whose Knowledge of the Manner of her Conversation, while with them, in all Holiness and Godliness, well assures them of the Truth of several Things here related concerning her, and disposes them to give Credit to the rest, of which they could not be Witnesses, and who, from the peculiar Respect they had for her, will be more ready than others to read them with Pleasure and Profit.

YOU have lost a very valuable Wife, and Your Affliction must needs be great; but, what Mercy is there mixed with it to make it as light as possible! As, in Mercy to her, God hath put an End to all her Pains, and Sorrows, and receiv'd her to himself, so, in Mercy to You, he did not

take her from You, before You was brought among Your nearest Relations, who will not be wanting to administer to You all the Consolation they are able, nor before, by Your late Removal to Witham, You was freed from the Troubles of a Family, and, in some Measure, from the Care of the young Orphans, Your Nephew and Cousins, whom, not without her chearful consenting to the Trouble it would give her, You had taken into Your House.

AND O! That I and Mine may so consider, and improve her exemplary Carriage in her last Sickness, and the many serious and affecting Things we heard from her, that it may be in Mercy to us also, that once and again, within these Twelve Months last past, she was raised up from the very Brink of the Grave, and brought so far to die among us.

THAT the Affliction may be abundantly sanctified to You; that You may be comforted and supported under it; and may have the Pleasure of hearing, that a great deal of Good is done by this plain Discourse on the melancholy Occasion; that You may be long continu'd in the World, and us'd as an Instrument of much Good, unto the Bodies, but especially the Souls, of many; and that, having done the Will of God in Your Generation, You may have Fulness of Joy, and everlasting Pleasures in Christ's Presence, is the hearty Prayer of

Your very affectionate Brother,

Much-Baddow,

Dec. 21. 1722.

JOHN GREENE:

SICKNESS comfortable,
AND
ADYING BED easy.

2 COR. v. 8.

*We are confident, I say, and willing, rather
to be absent from the Body, and to be
present with the Lord.*

THE Apostle, in this, and the latter End
of the foregoing Chapter, is accounting
for that Peace, and Satisfaction of Mind,
that Comfort, Joy, and Courage, which
he and his Fellow-Labourers in the Work of the Gospel,
had Experience of under very great and continual
Sufferings. Considering how they were troubled on
every Side, perplexed, chap. iv. 8. persecuted, cast down,
ver. 9. and always delivered unto Death for Jesus sake,
ver. 11. one wou'd be ready to think that their Bur-
den must be greater than they could bear; and that
their Spirit failing, they must necessarily sink under it;
but so far was it from this, that though their outward
Man was perishing, ver. 16. though the frequent Hard-

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ships

ships they endured were prejudicial to their Health; yet *the inward Man was renewed Day by Day*, ver. 16. *their Consolation by Christ more abounded*; their Confidence, and Vertue, a noble Fortitude, and Bravery of Soul, increas'd with their Affliction, and he speaks of it *as light, and but for a moment*, ver. 17.

AND among other Things to which it was owing, that they carried it in this Manner, under all their fore Troubles, that, which we have in the Words before us, is none of the least, *viz. their being willing rather to be absent from the Body and to be present with the Lord*. And we may look upon this as a Remedy against all the Evils of Life; a Remedy against Crosses, and Disappointments in our Hopes and Desires; a Remedy against the Loss of our Friends and Relations; a Remedy against Pain and Sickness in our Bodies; nay, a Remedy against Death it self. And if we can but come up to the Attainment of these Primitive Christians, though we shall not be secur'd from Afflictions (for Sin hath made this World a State of Sorrow, and *Man is born unto Trouble as the Sparks fly upwards*, Job v. 7.) yet by this Means we shall be raised, in great Measure, above the Fear of these, and the like Evils, and be mightily supported under all that may befall us.

IN the Words we may observe,

First, THE State of Believers upon their Death, they are absent from the Body, and present with the Lord.

Secondly, THE Thoughts of the Apostle and his Fellow-Labourers, concerning this State; they prefer it to Life; WILLING RATHER to be absent, &c.

Thirdly, THE Connexion that there is between these two Things, the being Confident; that is, bold; and couragious in a Time of Difficulty and Trial, and the being willing rather to die than live.

They

and a DYING BED easy. 3

They go together, and the *latter* has not a little Influence on the *former*.

I SHALL treat on the *two first* of these Heads in their Order, making such Reflexions on them, as I go along, as may seem proper: But the *last* will be consider'd no farther than it may fall in my Way in discoursing on the *Second*.

First, WE have in the Text, The State of Believers upon their Death; they are *absent from the Body*, and *present with the Lord*. In considering this it may be of some Service to us, to take Notice of that opposite Account we have of their Condition while they live, ver. 6. *At home in the Body*, and *absent from the Lord*.

AND we see here how it is with them, *First*, In Relation to their *Bodies*; and, *Secondly*, In respect of *the Lord*. As to their *Bodies*, while they live, they are *at home in them*; and when they die, they are *absent from them*; and it is the very Reverse of all this in regard of *the Lord*. For they are *absent from him* while in this World, but *present with him* upon their Death.

First, WE may observe, how it is with us as to the Body. While we live we are *at home in it*, no sooner do we die but we are *absent from it*. Thus far the Apostle's Notion of *living*, and *being dead*, holds true, whether applied to Believers or Unbelievers; and it is too plain to need any Explication. All therefore that we have to do on this Head, is to take Notice of the several Things that it teaches us. As,

First, THAT the Soul and Body are really different from each other. We can make no Sense at all of the Apostle's Discourse in this Chapter, but on this Supposition. For what is it that the Body is an *earthly House*, and that there is a *Building of God*, an *House not made with Hands*, *eternal in the Heavens*, ver. 2. if

not for the Soul? What is that which he speaks of, as being *uncloath'd*, and *cloath'd upon*, ver. 3. if not the Soul? And what but this can one while be *at home in the Body*, ver. 6. and another Time *absent from the Body*, ver. 8. What's the Meaning of all these Things, if the Soul and Body are the same? One would think, that all who believe the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, must necessarily look upon them as Beings widely different in their Nature from each other.

AND there's Proof of this sufficient for the Satisfaction of those who desire to know the Truth, even such as don't receive the Bible as the Word of God. To mention but one Argument for this, which is said to have convinc'd a bright and ingenious, but once atheistical Nobleman. It's often seen, that when the Body is in the weakest and most languishing Condition, Persons think as freely, and can reflect on Things done many Years ago, and judge of them, and reason as well ever.

THUS it was with our dear Sister, whose Death is the melancholy Occasion of this Discourse. Several Days before she died, the Springs of Life seem'd to have been broken, the Blood did not circulate briskly enough to carry Spirits and Heat to all the Parts of the Body, and yet the Operations of the Soul were not at all hinder'd. Talk to her upon any Subjects; ask her any Questions about the Things of this World, or those of the other, she would speak with as much Sense, and Understanding, and Judgment, as ever in the Time of her Health; and thus it was for ought appear'd, till within a Minute or two of her Departure. And give me leave to add, though the Sickness was very sore and afflictive, and she lay groaning under this Pain and the other in her Body; yet her Soul, at the same Time, enjoy'd sensible Pleasure, nay, ravishing Delight. And how can we account for all this, if the Soul, that thinking Being within us, be

be not in its Nature, really distinct from the Body? I take Notice of this, because it makes our Way the clearer to the other Lessons we may learn from this Notion of living, and being dead; and because this being admitted as a Truth, those will be the more readily received. It teaches us,

Secondly, **THAT** when as to this World we die, the Soul does not die, but lives separate from the Body. If Death had the same Effect on the Soul as it has on the Body, to what Purpose does the Apostle take any Notice at all how it is with us upon our Dying; or how can he, with any Propriety, speaking of that which is void of all Life, and Sense, express himself in such a manner as this, *WE are absent, WE are present*, &c. Ver. 6, 8.

THE Arguments for this Doctrine from the Light of Nature are so plain and conclusive, that it has generally been received by Men of all Nations, and Ages. If the Soul does not survive the Body, there is no Reward to the Pious, nor Punishment to the Wicked, but what they have in this Life. And if this be so, it is impossible to account for the Afflictions, and Sufferings of God's Servants, especially those they meet with in the Cause of Religion, and the Prosperity of Men going on in a Course of Sin, and we cannot shew the Consistence of these Things with the divine Justice and Goodness. The very Foundations of God's Government of the World would be rased, and little or nothing left to give Check to the Lusts of Men, or incourage any in his Service.

HOW many Persons may we meet with, whose only Care and Concern is for the Things of Time, the being comfortable, and happy, the few Years they may live in the World, and who make no Reckoning of a State after this; and take no Thought how it is likely to go with them in it! But is this reasonable? Can you answer to your own Minds, for such a Carriage

riage? If when we die there would be a total End of us; and if, as the Places that know us here in this World will know us no more, so there were no other Places to receive us; no other State for us to enter on, and live in; something might be said for that Reasoning, too common among Men, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die*, 1 Cor. xv. 22. q. d. "Let us make Provision for the Flesh, to fullfil the Lusts thereof, and indulge our selves in all those Things that have any Tendency to give us Pleasure, and Delight, the few Years we are to continue here, But is it fitting thou shouldst act upon such a Principle as this, when thou hast a Spirit within thee, that after thy Body shall become lifeless Clay, will live, and act separate from it; and, as we may add, be happy, or miserable, according to thy Conduct in this World? Should not some Care be taken of thy Soul, as well as Body? Should not something be laid up for that, in the World it will pass into, when thou diest? *I speak as to wise Men, judge ye what I say*. To carry the Matter a little farther.

Thirdly, WE may learn from hence, that the Soul is the chief Thing in Man, and that our Concern should be especially for this. We are made up of Body and Soul; but as if the Soul were the Whole of us, all that we are to take Care for; speaking of this only, it is said, *WE are at Home in the Body, and WE are absent from the Lord*. And there is good Reason for this Way of Speaking; for the Body hath not of it self any Sense, or Perception, and is not capable of Happiness, or Misery; but it is the Soul that lives in the Body, that the Impressions made upon it, do thus affect; and when the Soul has left the Body, the Life is gone, and the Body is a meer Carcass, and the Soul alone is then the Person: This lives, thinks, and acts in its separate State, and is rather more capable of Joy, or Sorrow, Pleasure, or Pain, than before.

WHAT

WHAT Fools and Madmen then are they, who prefer their Bodies to their Souls, and the little Concerns of those, to the infinitely greater Concerns of these ! Certainly the great, the main Thing we have to do, is to take Care of our Souls. This is a Matter of the utmost Consequence, and Importance: For as our Saviour speaks, *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?* Mat. xvi. 26. The Reason that he brings for this, viz. *That the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels, and THEN he shall reward every Man according to his Works,* Ver. 27. leads us to observe, That we shall not only be happy, or miserable, while absent from the Body; but also after the Resurrection, and awful Day of Judgment, even to all Eternity. And surely, when this is the Case, 'tis impossible we should be too thoughtful of our Souls, too solicitous for their Happiness in the future State. But

I proceed to the other Part of our Apostle's Notion, of living and being dead; in which he has his Eye on Believers only, and observes how it is with them, as to the Lord Jesus, in these Circumstances. While they live in this World, they are *absent from the Lord*: But upon their dying, they are *present with him*. We may say indeed of the Unbeliever, that while here, he is absent from the Lord; but Death does not bring him into Christ's Presence, and the Enjoyment of him; no, this is the peculiar Privilege of the Believer.

IT may be necessary to say something for the Explication of this Matter. And here observe, that when it is said that Believers in this Life are *absent from the Lord*, and that upon their Death they are *present with him*, the Meaning is not, that they have no Enjoyment of Christ, and his Presence in this World. To assert this, would be to speak against the happy Experience of many Christians, who at
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some

some Times have such Communion with their Lord ; such Manifestation of his Love, and such lively Affections, and Desires towards him, excited in their Souls, by the Influences of his Spirit, that they know not how to express what they taste, and feel : And they would not part with what they enjoy, for all the Pleasures there are to be met with in the Tents of Sin. But by this is intimated, that there is *so much more* of Christ to be enjoy'd in the State the Believers enter on at their Death, that if we compare their Enjoyment of him in this World, with what they shall find upon their Dying, that may be called *Absence from him*, and this *the being present with him*.

As the Apostle observes in the Verse before the Text, *we walk by Faith, and not by Sight*. Faith, indeed, is said to be *the Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. And at some Times it gives the Soul such a lively View of the Joys of the other State, that it contemplates them with a very sensible Pleasure, earnestly desires them, and is even ravish'd with the Hopes of them : But when it is in its most vigorous Exercise, the distant Prospect it gives us, falls inconceivably short of the future Enjoyment. Faith may perform its Office very well, and is of great Service to us ; it contributes not a little to the present Pleasure and Comfort of the Believer ; but it cannot do that for us which we may expect from being in the Presence of our Redeemer, hearing his sweet Voice, and seeing his lovely Countenance. While in this World, at the best, we see him *through a Glass darkly*, and O the Difference between that, and the Viewing of him *Face to Face*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

BESIDES, here we *know but in Part*, whereas in the other State, Believers will *know even as they also are known*. It may be the half of what is to be enjoy'd in Christ's Presence is not told us ; or if it be,
through

through our Ignorance and Dullness we do not take it in; and where Revelation and Knowledge fail, Faith must necessarily do the same.

AND alas! how often does a Believer find, while he is here, that his Faith is weak and languid, and the Views he has of the *future State* are very faint! It is like a Thing at a vast Distance, imperfectly seen, scarcely discerned. And through the Cares and Hurries of the World, his Mind is frequently diverted from it; or though he sees something of the Joys there are in it, yet there's so much Corruption remaining in him, so much Sin mixeth it self with the best of his Services, that he is ever and anon calling his Sincerity in question, and saying in his Heart, "Alas! I fear I shall never be with the Lord where he is! He will not admit into his Presence such a poor, sinful Creature as I am. And the Weakness of our Faith, or our Hope, very much hinders our Enjoyment of Christ."

BUT when present with the Lord, the Believer will be able to take a near, and a full View of him. He will see him as he is, in all his glorious Perfections; the Sight will be transforming, the Sight will be continual, and nothing any more like a Doubt, or like a Fear, will arise in him, to damp his Joy, and mar his Pleasure. His Work will then be ended; his Time of Difficulty, and Trial over; his Reward begun, and he will see his Happiness founded too firmly on Christ the Rock of Ages, ever to be moved: all his Sins will then be done away; all the Disorders of his Soul healed; all his Graces perfected; and he will be held in the joyful Expectation of the general Resurrection, and Day of Judgment, when the vile Body he laid down in the Dust shall be raised refined, glorious, and immortal, and again be united to his Soul; and when all his Desires shall be fully satisfied; all the Promises of God to him fulfilled; all his Ex-

10 SICKNESS *comfortable,*

pectations answer'd; and when, in a Word, his Redemption in every Respect shall be compleated.

O BLISSFUL! O glorious State! With a great deal of Reason may it be represented to us under this Notion, *the being present with the Lord*; and well may the State of Believers in this World, when compar'd with this, be spoken of as a State of Absence from him.

HENCE we learn,

First, THAT the Souls of Believers do not sleep with their Bodies, 'till the Resurrection. Did Death reduce the Soul into the same lifeless, and unactive State with the Body, it might rather be said, That the Believer, while he lives, is present with the Lord; and that, upon his Dying, he is absent from him. And upon these Terms, Life to him would be very much preferable to Death.

Secondly, THAT those have a great deal to comfort them, who are mourning for the Decease of pious Friends, and Relations. When the Apostle had been discoursing on the Resurrection of Believers, and of Christ's receiving them to himself, in the Day of Judgment, that *they might be ever with the Lord*, 1 Thes. iv. latter End, he concludes with this, *Wherefore comfort ye one another with these Words*. And thus may we improve the Consideration we have just now been entertaining our selves with, *That Death ushers the Believer into Christ's Presence*, and leads to a fuller Enjoyment of him than we can have in this World. We should meditate on it, and speak of it, to cheer, and revive our Spirits made sorrowful by the Death of our near and dear Relatives, who were numbered amongst Believers. O! let us be thinking with our selves, "How well is it with them, now Death has done its Office upon them, to what it was before! What a happy Alteration is made in their Condition! Here they were in a Vale of Tears, a World of Sorrow; and now they are
"rejoycing

“rejoycing in the Presence of their Redeemer.
 “Now their Tears are wiped away, their Com-
 “plaints are all over, their Joy is full, their Plea-
 “sures uninterrupted. We have lost their Prayers
 “to God for us, their kind Offices of Love to us;
 “the Delight we took in their Company is now no
 “more; but how much have they gain’d! As well
 “as they lov’d us, they would not leave Christ’s
 “Presence to dwell with us again in this sinful State.
 Let us not fix our Thoughts on our Loss; but con-
 template their Happiness.

AND blessed be God, the Life of our dear Sister,
 gives us Ground thus to comfort our selves, now
 mourning her Death. A religious Education, thro’
 the Blessing of God upon it, as I have been inform’d,
 was the Means of bringing her, very early, under
 serious Impressions. It was affecting to see and hear
 her, the Day before she died, exhorting her young
 Nephews, Nieces, and Cousins, to mind God and
 Religion betimes, with a Countenance, Voice, and
 Words, expressing the tenderest Love to them, great-
 est Concern for their Souls, and Sense of the Im-
 portance of what she was recommending to them.
 O let us lift up our Hearts to God for them, that
 these may never forget her dying Counsels, and that
 they may never rise up in Judgment against them.
 O my dear Children, (said she) remember your Creator in
 the Days of your Youth. Death may come while you are
 young, see that you be ready for it; give Diligence to make
 your Calling and Election sure. Obey them that are set
 over you; read, pray, meditate, and I pray God bless you,
 my dear Children, the Lord bless you, and be with you.
 And it seems, she knew the Advantage of early
 Piety from her own Experience.

ACCORDING to the Account I have had of
 her, which my Observation of her Carriage in my Fa-
 mily confirms, it was her daily Practice, for many Years
 together, to spend a great deal of Time in Retirement,

in the Duties, (we may suppose) she recommended to her young Relations; reading the Scriptures, and other good Books, serious Prayer to God, and divine Meditation. She was very conscientious in keeping holy the Lord's Day. She cheerfully embraced all Opportunities of attending on publick Worship, and would often go to it, under great Indisposition, as she did the last Time she join'd with this Assembly. And out of a Concern for the Souls of her Servants, she would not suffer them to be absent from it, on Lord's Days, or other Times; but provided, without detaining them at Home, for the necessary Refreshment of her Family, and Friends.

AND these, and other Things observable in her, which the Method of my Discourse may lead me in other Places to take Notice of, give us good Grounds to conclude, That though a Relation, on many Accounts desirable, is gone, yet we need not, should not sorrow for her Death, *as others which have no Hope.*

Thirdly, THAT the Believer, who has the Hopes of being present with the Lord upon his Death, hath Reason to be willing rather to die than to live. Thus it was with the Apostle, and the Christians in whose Name he speaks. Thus it has been, and thus it is with many, they chuse Death before Life, *willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord*: And in all this they act upon the highest Reasons; they shew a sound Judgment; a good Understanding, preferring that *which is far better*, Phil. i. 23. We may love our Friends, and Relations; we may relish these, and the other Comforts of Life that God gives us; but, certainly, we set too great a Value upon them, when we put the Pleasures they yield in the Ballance against those there are in Christ's Presence.

I WOULD not forget what the Deceased said to me upon this Head, the Day before she died, in a serious

serious and affecting manner. *Ah, dear Brother! this World is a perfect Scene of Vanity; there's nothing here worth living for; immediately repeating several, if not all, of the following Verses.*

*Farewel, vain World! I bid adieu,
Thou can'st not fill but cloy;
Thy Throne, O God, does send forth new
And more refined Joy.*

*Meer Vanity does Man pursue
With Eagerness and Heat;
The bravest Things the World can shew
Are but a perfect Cheat.*

*Who gain the Riches of the World
Gain but a finer Dross;
Who gain a World and lose a Soul
Sustain the greatest Loss.*

*Alas! there's nothing here that can
True Blessedness afford,
Ye painted Shadows! Get ye gone,
Ye hold me from my Lord.*

*O happy they who only love
Their God, and him admire!
That I may taste your purer Joys
I'll from the World retire.*

Penitential Cries, IX.

To which she added, *We are always confident, knowing, that whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by Faith, not by Sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather, to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8. Repeating the last of these Verses over again, she told*

told me, She wou'd have that the Text for her Funeral Sermon.

THESE were the pious Breathings of her Soul, and certainly her Sentiments of these Things were very just. There's no real Satisfaction to be had in any Thing here below. No true Contentment can this World afford us. How hath Satan blinded the Minds of them who believe not, that they should be seeking after no other Portion than is to be enjoy'd in this Life? And how weak is the Faith; How low the Hopes of the Believer, who is so fond of these lower Things as to be loath to depart, to be present with the Lord? But this leads me to the other general Head.

Secondly, THE Thoughts of the Apostle, and his Fellow-Labourers, concerning the State of Believers upon their Death; they prefer it to Life, WILLING RATHER to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.

A DESIRE to die, sometimes proceeds from Melancholy, or Fretfulness, and Impatience under the Troubles of Life. The World is not govern'd according to a Man's Mind: This Thing, and the other, is not order'd as he wou'd have it, and he cries out upon it with the Prophet, *Jonah iv. 3. Therefore, now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my Life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.* Or, his Afflictions are so many, his Burdens lie so heavy upon him, that with *Job, chap. vii. 15, 16. His Soul chooseth Strangling and Death, rather than Life; he loaths it, he wou'd not live always.* But this is rather his Infirmary than his Grace. It is our Duty to be resigned to the Will of God; satisfied with what he does, and we should be saying, "Lord, if thou see'st fit to order Matters in this manner, *Not my Will but thine be done.*" "Dost thou see it proper for me to continue a while longer in this melancholy and afflicted State? Hast thou any Thing further for me to do here? Can

"I be any Ways serviceable to thy People, or to the
 "Interest of my dear Redeemer in the World? do
 "with me as seems good in thy sight, I submit to thy
 "Pleasure.

A G A I N, there is a Desire to die, which proceeds from the Fears of what is before us, and may fall upon us, if we live longer in the World. The Clouds are gather'd thick and black; and it looks as if a terrible Storm was a coming: it seems as if a *Day of Trouble and Distress*; a Day of Difficulty and Trial was at Hand, either as to the Church of God, or the Nation in general, or our Selves in particular, and wanting a true Christian Confidence and Courage, a holy Fortitude, and Bravery of Spirit to bear up the Mind against the Fear of Evil, we are praying with *Job*, chap. xiv. 13. *O that thou wouldest hide me in the Grave! That thou wouldest keep me secret until thy Wrath be past!* Neither is this the *Willingness rather to die*, that is here recommended to us.

B U T it is that which ariseth from an Apprehension of the Excellency of that Pleasure there is in Christ's Presence, above all that is to be met with here below. It springs from Love to Christ, and a Longing to enjoy him in a fuller, and nearer Manner, than we can do in the present State. It is a Desire to die that argues our Spirituality, and heavenly Mindedness; or that our *Affections are set on Things above, and not on Things on the Earth*, and which is attended with Submission to the Will of God. And,

T H A T we may have this *Willingness rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord*. These two Things are necessary.

First, T H A T we have a *lively Faith* in what God has told us in his Word, about being *present with the Lord*. Glorious Things, indeed, are spoken of this State, and of their Enjoyments who are with Christ; and we must *mix Faith* with what we read and hear, or it will not profit us; it will not excite in us these Desires of being in his Presence.

WHAT

WHAT we believe not, as to any Effect it has upon us, is as if it were not. *Seen Things* make an Impression upon our Minds, and raise in us a Fear and Abhorrence of them, or Desires of enjoying them, according to their Nature: But the *unseen Things* of the other World do no Ways move us, unless there be that *Faith* which is the Substance and Evidence of them; which brings them near, and sets them before us; and they have more or less Influence on us, in proportion to the Degree of our Faith. We should therefore be praying, *Lord increase our Faith, Lord help our Unbelief*, and be waiting on God for his Grace in an Attendance on the Ordinances: *Secondly*, THAT we have the *Hope* of this, *That when we are absent from the Body, we shall be present with the Lord.*

NOT all, who die, enter into Christ's Presence; no, we may speak unto him in the Words of the Psalmist, *Psal. v. 4, 5. Thou art not a God that hath Pleasure in Wickedness; neither shall Evil dwell with thee. The Foolish shall not stand in thy Sight, thou hatest all Workers of Iniquity.* And the greater Sense we have of the Joys there are in Christ's Presence, the more unwilling shall we be to die, as long as we fear that we are in the Number of the unhappy Persons who shall be shut out of it.

SHOULD we not then be crying out? *Lord, Who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy Presence?* For whom did Christ pray, when on Earth? For whom is he interceding in Heaven, *Father, I will, that they be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me?* To whom hath he said, *I go to prepare a Place for you, I will come again, and receive you to my self, that where I am, there ye may be also?* How must it be with me? What must I do, that when absent from the Body I may be present with the Lord? There is, as our dying Sister was observing, a taking the Promises to

ur selves when they do not belong to us; a laying hold on them without Reason; and, as she added, *It is a dreadful Thing to go out of the World with a Lie in one's Mouth; it is dreadful to be mistaken.* She was saying, and we trust upon the best Grounds, *I hope I am not; I hope I have not deceived myself:* But let each of us put the Question seriously to himself, "Is this my Case? Can I thus speak as in the Presence of GOD, the Searcher of all Hearts, and under a near View of approaching Eternity?" She added, *I would be tried, I desire to be searched.* Oh! that there were such an Heart in us all. With what Readiness of Mind, then, should we receive the following Particulars, the Characters of those, who have good Grounds for their Hopes, that when absent from the Body, they shall be present with the Lord; and with what Care should we examine, whether they are found upon us! These happy, happy Persons, have,

First, A SENSE of their sinful and miserable State by Nature. They apprehend themselves as vile Sinners, contrary to God, Enemies to him, and his Law, and so, as in themselves, under his Wrath, and Curse.

THE Convincing us of this is the first Work of the Spirit of God upon the Soul. By this he shews us our need of Christ, and makes us concern'd to get an Interest in him; by this he takes us off of all Dependance on our own Works for Righteousness, and brings us to count all Things but Dung that we may win Christ, and be found in him, not having our own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.

THIS is sometimes attended with great, and continued Distress, and Terror of Mind: But various are the Dealings of God with those he brings Home to himself. And we cannot say, our Conviction of our Sinfulness, and Misery has not been sound, because

we were not terrified, as many others were, by the Thunders of the Law, by the Fire, and Smoke of Mount *Sinai*. Dost thou lament, and bewail the Sinfulness of thy Nature, Heart, and Actions; and is this thy Language? "Lord, there is nothing in me to recommend me to thy Favour; *in me, that is my Flesh, dwelleth no good Thing*. Thy righteous Law has condemn'd me for my Sin, and my own Works can never justify me; there is nothing, alas! that I can do, that is fit for thine Acceptance. In Christ alone is my Help found." Does such Language as this, I say, flow from thy Heart? Fear not, a good Work is begun, tho' thou art a Stranger to that Terror, and Anguish of Mind, that some feel at their first Awakening.

Secondly, FAITH in the Lord Jesus Christ. This supposeth some Knowledge of him, and is not merely an Assent of the Mind to the great Things God has revealed in his Word concerning Christ; but also the Receiving him as Prophet, Priest, and King, to be made of God unto us, *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*; and the committing our Souls to him; trusting in him, as one able to save to the Uttermost them that come unto God by him.

SOME Persons conclude, from their having been awaken'd to a Concern for their Souls, and their everlasting Welfare; and upon it, reforming their Lives in some Instances, that they shall certainly be saved, though they know little or nothing of Christ Jesus, the only Way to Heaven; and though being ignorant of God's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own, they have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God: But how vain are such Hopes! There must be the Work of the Law convincing us of our Sin, and Misery. But Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth, Rom. x. 4. And the seeing that we are sinful, lost, and undone; the crying out, *What shall we do to be saved*, is no Argument of

of our having good Hopes of being present with the Lord when we die, unless these Convictions lead us to Christ. The Word of God is very plain, and express in this Case, *John iii. 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.*

IT is not without Pleasure that I reflect on the Expressions of the deceased, shewing her Sentiments of this Matter. When upon her saying, *I desire to be searched, I would be tried*, these Questions were put to her, "Have you not, many Years ago, solemnly given your self up to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in Covenant, and engag'd to be the Lord's? Has it not been your Care, and Endeavour to live according to the Gospel? Have you not, do you not, accept of the blessed Jesus as your Prophet, Priest, and King, as your Lord, and Master, your Head, and Husband? She answer'd, *Yes, with all my Heart, and Soul. I know my own Insufficiency. I am nothing, and can do nothing of my self, but depend intirely on the Grace of God in Christ, on the Righteousness, Merits, and Mediation of Christ Jesus my Lord. I have no Confidence in the Flesh. I rejoice in Christ Jesus, and trust through him to be saved. And,* which I look'd upon as an Argument of her Sense of the Importance of this Matter, she rous'd up all the Vigor, and Strength she had left, and spake these Things with uncommon Earnestness.

THE rather take Notice of this, because I fear many are ruin'd for ever, through their neglect of Christ, and his Righteousness; a sort of honest, well-meaning People; Persons who maintain a fair Character in the World; such as are in some measure thoughtful of their Souls, and concern'd for their eternal Happiness; such as *have a Zeal of God though not according to Knowledge, Rom. x. 2.* and how great will be their Fall! How sad their Disappointment at the last, who are rais'd so high in their Hopes, who verily think that all is well

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between God, and their Souls, and go out of the World fully expecting, that the Redeemer will receive them into Heaven, upon their first crying to him, *Lord, Lord, open to us!* But, to their great Amazement, and Terror, shall find the Gates barr'd against them, and be doom'd to Hell, with an, *I know you not, whence you are.* Oh! may the good Spirit of God enlighten all our Minds in this Mystery of the Gospel; and give us to see, that our Salvation is of Grace, and not of Works; and that we can be justified no otherwise than by the Righteousness of Christ receiv'd by Faith, and imputed to us.

CHRIST is despised; Faith in him made a Jest of, in the Age in which we live; but let me address myself to you in the Words of the Apostle *Paul*, in his Sermon at *Antioch*, Acts xiii. 38, &c. *Be it known unto you, Men, and Brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the Forgiveness of Sins. And by him all that believe are justified from all Things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the Prophets, Behold, ye Despisers, and wonder, and perish. Unto them that believe, and unto them that shall be saved, Christ is precious.*

Thirdly, THEY who have good Hopes of being present with the Lord when they die, have seriously dedicated themselves unto God, and live in his Service.

SOME Persons have been ready to look upon the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in the Lord Jesus, and Salvation by Grace, as contrary to Godliness; but it is far from being so, as taught us in the Scripture; for *working by Love*, Gal. v. 6. and *purifying the Heart*, Acts xv. 9. are the Characters that gives us of the Faith it recommends as saving; and it uses *Faith which works by Love*, as a synonymous Term for the new Creature, Gal. v. 6. vi. 15. compar'd, intimating, that all, who believe on the Lord Jesus to the Saving of their Souls,
are

are new. Creatures, have new Hearts, and lead new Lives; are Persons truly loving, and fearing God, sincerely devoted to his Service; such as hate Sin, and love Holiness; such as have taken the Word of God for their Rule, and make his Glory the End of their Lives. And there's no Inconsistence at all between these Two Doctrines, That by Grace we are saved through Faith, and that not of our selves, it is the Gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. And that all, who are saved, are God's Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, Ver. 10.

DO not think, therefore, that they, who magnify the Riches of the Grace of God, in the Saving of Men by Jesus Christ, ascribing Salvation from first to last to divine Grace, and not to our own Works, do make Christ the Minister of Sin, when they teach, at the same Time, that he gave himself for us to redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, Tit. ii. 14. and that, without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14.

THE foregoing Particulars may serve,

First, TO assist us in the Examination of our selves, Whether we have the good Hopes, that when absent from the Body we shall be present with the Lord, so necessary to our being willing rather to die than to live. And we should be turning in upon our own Hearts, and seriously enquiring how it is with us, as to the several Things that have just now been mentioned. And where we do not come under the Character of these happy Persons, let us not flatter our selves, that we shall share with them in their Privileges. All such Thoughts, and Hopes are vain, and like the Expectation of the Wicked, shall perish, Prov. x. 28. and end in the most miserable Disappointment, and Confusion.

Secondly, TO direct us in our Duty; in our Way to this Happiness. And they shew us how it must be with us, and what we must do, not merely that

we may be present with the Lord on our Dying; but, that we may also have the good Hopes of this while we live. To the *former* no more is necessary than that we answer these Characters; but there will not be the *latter*, unless we see, and know, that they are indeed found upon us. Our Happiness in the future State is secured, where having been truly convinced of our sinful, and miserable Condition by Nature, we have seen our Need of Christ Jesus, and by Faith have received him as offered in the Gospel, and where, at the same Time, that we depend on Christ alone for Righteousness, and eternal Life, we are saying unto God, with our Souls, *thou art our Lord*; and are fully determined, by the Help of divine Grace, to live in his Service: But we must be able to reflect on his Work in our Hearts, and know what has passed within us, and see, that thus we have been affected, thus we have been doing; or we shall not *actually* have those Hopes of the future Blessedness, which these Things give us Reason for entertaining.

AND O! that all of us were seriously concerned about this Matter, and resolv'd, with God's Assistance, to give all Diligence that we may have *the full Assurance of Hope*, that it will go well with us in another State, and so may find in our selves that *Willingness rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord*, recommended to us in the Text.

THIS is a considerable Attainment. Every sincere Christian, every Believer, does not come up to it; but its Fruits are pleasant, and will well reward the Pains we may be at in seeking after it, as may appear from the following Considerations.

First, THIS is the Way to know by Experience the Sweets and Pleasures of a religious Life. We then begin to live, to enjoy our selves, to go on with Comfort in God's Service, when it is thus with us.

WISDOM

and a DYING BED easy. 23

WISDOM's Ways (that is, the Ways of Religion) are *Ways of Pleasantness*, and all her Paths are Peace, Prov. iii. 17. But then, and not before, do we find them to be so, when we are in these happy Circumstances. Many serious Persons are in almost continual Fear, and Distress in their Minds; under that Trouble and Uneasiness that it may be they were utter Strangers to, before they began to concern themselves with Religion. In the Days of their Ignorance they were looking only at the Things which are seen, which are temporal, and concerned for nothing farther, than that it might go well with them in the present Life: But now their Eyes being opened, and the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ having shone in upon them, they see there's a Life after this, an eternal State, and World before them. And looking on this by an Eye of Faith, they have such a Sense of what Importance it is, that their Happiness therein be secured, that while this hangs in doubt, and they have no Assurance of it, they cannot but be greatly distressed. Let none think the worse of Religion for this; she is not the least to be blamed. For their Fears will all vanish; their Distress will be over, as soon as they shall have made such a Progress in her Ways, as to know that they are her sincere Votaries, the resolved Servants of God, the humble Followers of the Blessed Jesus, and thus shall come to have the good Hopes of being present with him when they die. And as long as, being enabled by divine Grace to walk humbly and closely with their God, these Hopes are maintained, *HIS Peace that passeth all Understanding*, shall keep their Hearts, and Minds through Jesus Christ. They'll have that merry Heart that doth good like a Medicine; that is in it self a continual Feast: And going on their Way cheerfully, and rejoycing, will recommend Religion unto others.

Secondly, BY THIS we are best provided against all the common Troubles of the World. The heaviest Afflictions will be *light* in our Eyes, those that last the longest seem *but for a Moment*, if we are but in this happy Condition, and can say through divine Grace, "All is well with our Souls. The main Point is secured. We have good Hopes of being blessed for ever in another State, though we meet with such Difficulties, and Trials in this.

THIS happy Influence it had on the Apostle, and his Fellow-Sufferers. Their Afflictions were so many, so constant, so trying, that had their *Hope* been *only in this Life*, had there been nothing for them to have expected in another World, they should have looked upon themselves as of *all Men the most miserable*, 1 Cor. xv. 19. But firmly believing there was a State after this, and knowing, that when *absent from the Body* they should be *present with the Lord*, which they look'd upon as *far better* than *abiding in the Flesh*, they were *confident* under all their Trials; feared none of the Evils they were in danger of; bore up under all that lay upon them with great Fortitude, and Courage; were patient in Tribulation; resigned to the Will of God; satisfied with his Dealings; contented in every State; Nay, chearful, and rejoycing in Hope, they had inward Supports, and Comforts the World knew not of. Joys they felt, that Strangers intermeddled not with. And,

THE like Effect it may have on others, even all that have these Hopes. For how afflicted soever they are, they may be saying, "Why art thou cast down, O my Soul! Why art thou, at any Time, disquieted within me! What need I fear! Of whom should I be afraid, when the Lord is my Friend, the Almighty is my Father! He *numbers the very Hairs of my Head*. The minutest Circumstances of my Life, all my Concerns are of his ordering; *his Eye is always over*

"me,

and a DYING BED easy. 25

me, his Ear is open to my Cry; the Covenant he has made with me, his Word, and Promise assure me, that all Things shall work together for my Good. Hath he not said, My Grace is sufficient for thee; as thy Day is so shall thy Strength be? Improve but these Afflictions, O my Soul, carry it aright under them, bring forth the Fruit of them, and thou wilt find they work for thee a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. 'Tis but a few Years, Months, Weeks, or Days more, and all these will be over. I shall rest from my Labours, and receive my Reward, glorious, everlasting. Yet a while longer, a few Sighs, and Groans more, and I shall leave this Vale of Tears, this World of Sorrow. And O the Fulness of Joy, the never-dying Pleasures, I shall have in Christ's Presence! O how reviving, and supporting, how comfortable, and cheering, nay, how ravishing are these Thoughts! Happy are the People that are in this Case, as in a Time of Prosperity, so in all their Afflictions. For, Thirdly, THERE's nothing like THIS to make Sickness comfortable, and a dying Bed easy. And, indeed, in sick, and dying Circumstances, what is there that can comfort us, but this Hope, that when absent from the Body, we shall be present with the Lord?

O the Pain and Anguish, that a Person must feel, having the free Exercise of his Reason, and not given up to Hardness of Heart, and Blindness of Mind, who hath Death staring him in the Face, a near View of approaching Eternity, and no Hopes at all of being present with the Lord. Who can express, who can represent to the Life, who can conceive the distressed Condition the Man is in, who is thinking within himself, "Death is just ready to lay his cold Hand upon me, and I must go. A few Hours, or Moments more, and my Soul must leave this Body, and take its Flight into another

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“ World ; but ah ! how will it be with me there ?
 “ Alas ! I have made no Provision at all for my fu-
 “ ture Happiness. God is my Enemy ; He offer’d to
 “ be at Peace with me ; He offer’d me Mercy, but
 “ I rejected his Offers ; would none of his Counsel,
 “ despised all his Reproof ; and now alas ! I fear,
 “ I must for ever lie under his Wrath and Displea-
 “ sure. There will remain nothing for my Soul in
 “ its separate State, but a certain fearful looking for
 “ of Judgment, and fiery Indignation. What shall
 “ I do ? Whither shall I fly ? To whom shall I look
 “ for Help ?” How must such an one then lament,
 and bewail his Folly, in neglecting his Soul, and the
 Concerns of the other World, in the Time of his
 Health !

BUT on the other Hand, how easy, how com-
 fortable, and happy is the Person in a dying Condi-
 tion, who can say, and upon good Grounds, “ Let
 “ Death come when it will, I am waiting, I am rea-
 “ dy for it. It will put an End to all my Com-
 “ plaints, all my Fears, and Troubles, and let me
 “ into the World of Joy, and Bliss.” He may think
 with Pleasure of the Disorders he is under, of the
 Pains, and Weakness he feels, as hoping that the
 greater these are, the nearer he is to his Dissolution,
 the nearer to his Happiness. When Friends stand
 by, and can do him no Good, when Physicians are
 of no Value, when the Thoughts of all he has in the
 World, can no longer give him Pleasure ; this, the
 best Cordial, will keep him from fainting. This will
 bear up his Mind, and cheer his Spirits ; the good
 Hopes he has, that when *absent from the Body, he shall*
be present with the Lord. And now

FOR the Glory of the Grace of God, for the
 Comfort of mourning Relations, for the Confirma-
 tion of that which we have just now been speaking
 of, and for the quickening of us all to our Duty,
 give me Leave to observe, that the Deceased had
 these

these Hopes, and that she found these to be the blessed Effects they produced.

FOR some Time, indeed, after she began to be serious, she was, as I am informed, under many Doubts, and Fears; greatly distressed, lest she should miss of Salvation: But being enabled by the Grace of God, to wait on him in the Way of Holiness, trusting and depending on the Lord Jesus, the Light of God's Countenance at length was lifted up upon her Soul, and she had good Hopes, through Grace, of the future Blessedness; and to the End of her Days was enjoying the Pleasures, and Comforts Religion affordeth.

HER Heart being fixed, trusting in the Lord, she was not afraid of evil Tidings; but could think of threatening Dangers, without any Thing of that Disturbance in her Spirits, which many of God's Servants in such Cases do feel: And when it was a Day of Adversity with her, she was far from fainting.

SEVERAL Years ago, in a free Conversation with a truly honourable, and pious Lady, she was saying (not, we may suppose, without great Thankfulness to God, and Admiration of his Grace) for some Time, *I have been delivered from the Fears of Death, tho' formerly much afraid of it.* And when the Lady answer'd, *'Tis one Thing to speak thus of dying when Death seems at a Distance; but another Thing when Death is near, and in view:* She replied, *I know not how it may be with me then; but I hope God, who hath taken away my Fear, will also keep me from it, when Death comes.* And the God in whom she trusted, did not disappoint her Hopes.

SHE was exercised, since January last, with several sore, and tedious Fits of Sickness, and once and again, under the Apprehensions that the Time of her Continuance in this World would be but short. And in all she was patient, and resigned to the Will of

28 SICKNESS comfortable,

God ; and frequently expressed her *Willingness* rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.

ABOUT the Middle of October, the Disorders from which she had been not full Two Months recovered, returned upon her with very great Violence, and troublesome Symptoms. She was praying the Morning of the Day before she died, *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine Anger, nor chasten me in thy hot Displeasure : Give me some Ease, if it be thy Will, before I go out of this World, and am no more seen.* And, to the Wonder of all about her, her Prayers were heard, and answered ; and about Noon her Pains so far left her, that she sat up, and was pleasant, and chearful ; the Night was tolerably comfortable ; the next Morning she seemed to breathe easier than she had done before, the greatest Part of her Illness ; when, on a sudden, Breath failing, she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, without any Thing of the Convulsions, Agony, and Pain, the Dying often feel. Thus tenderly did God deal with her, in her last Moments. But how many wearisome Nights, and Days, had been appointed to her before this ! How very troublesome, and painful to Flesh and Blood were her Disorders ! and yet she never uttered any Thing like a Complaint of the Dealings of God with her, but was quietly waiting his Will. Her Spirits were exceeding low, but how calm, and easy ! How comfortable, and chearful, did she all along seem to be in her Soul ! And with what Composure, nay Pleasure of Mind, would she every now and then be speaking of her approaching Dissolution.

SURELY she enjoy'd not a little of Heaven, the last Day particularly, that she spent upon Earth. Such a lively Frame, such a holy Transport, such a heavenly Rapture of Joy was she in, for several Hours, as is not very common. And it was the more to be admir'd, because of her great Weakness.

How

How did the sacred Fire in her Soul then burn! How was she then speaking with her Tongue! Several of the very sensible, and judicious, as well as serious, and heavenly Things, that then dropp'd from her, you have already heard. A few others we may take notice of in this Place.

REFLECTING on what God had done for her Soul, and the good Hopes she had, she cry'd out, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory! Thanks be to God, which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold him, and not another. O! Sing unto the Lord, ye Saints of his, give Thanks unto his Name. O! Praise the Lord, bless the Name of the Lord. I will extol thee, my God, O King! I will bless thy Name for ever, and ever.*

SOMETHING leading her to speak of her Burial, *I care not, saith she, where you lay my Body, for I know that my Redeemer will gather together my scattered Dust at the Last Day. And on this, or some like Occasion, she repeated the following Lines.*

*O! How the Resurrection Light
Will clarify Believers Sight?
How joyful will the Saints arise,
And rub the Dust from off their Eyes!*

*My Soul, my Body, I will trust
With him, who numbers every Dust,
My Saviour faithfully will keep
His own, and Death is but a Sleep.*

Penitential Cries, XXXV.

TAKING Notice of the Palpitation of her Heart, which to a great Degree she had been all along troubled with;

with; *When* said she, will this Heart of mine cease to beat? Lord, *What* wait I for, mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation? *What*, not yet Lord! All the Days of my appointed Time will I wait till my Change comes.

HER Hand being cold, and being desir'd to cover it, that it might be warm, *It signifies nothing*, saith she, *it will soon be in the Dust*, it is but a Lump of Clay at the best; and immediately address'd her self to God in these Verses.

*Support my weak and tottering Faith
Whilst dismal Fears annoy;
My Jesus be my sweet Defence,
My Jesus be my Joy.*

*Blest Advocate, do thou not fail
At this Time to appear;
O! Let my shaken Faith prevail,
My Evidence be clear.*

*My Soul in thy sweet Hands I trust,
Now I can sweetly sleep;
My Body falling to the Dust
I leave with thee to keep.*

Id. XXXVI.

*Great God, I own thy Sentence just,
And Nature must decay;
I yield my Body to the Dust,
To dwell with Fellow-Clay.*

Mr. WATTS's Hymns, B. i. H. 6.

IT being observed, that it was a Mercy that so many Things of this Nature were brought to her Remembrance, she answer'd, *I have a frail Memory, but God brings them into my Mind as I have need.*

SHE was frequently calling upon God, and praying with holy Stephen, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*; and earnest-

earnestly desir'd her Relations to recommend her to God by Prayer; and that they, particularly her Husband, wou'd willingly resign her. *I have wanted, saith she, neither for Food, nor Medicine; and since God, who, in former Times, has made small Means greatly useful, now sees fit to withhold his Blessing, you shou'd resign me, and endeavour to be contented.* And thanking her Husband for his great Love and Affection to her, and the other Relations present, for their Friendship and Respect, she was praying, *The Lord bless you! The Lord reward you spiritually! The Lord bless you all, and the whole Israel of God.*

THUS was she praying; thus was she praising; thus did she look Death, the King of Terrors, in the Face, with Comfort. Thus was she rejoicing and triumphing, in a Sense of God's Love, and in the Hopes, that when absent from the Body she shou'd be present with the Lord. Thus, though under great Weakness, and rack'd with Pain, she cou'd say with the Psalmist, upon God's lifting up the Light of his Countenance, *Psal. iv. 7. Thou hast put Gladness in my Heart, more than in the Time that their Corn and their Wine increased.* And thus she gave full Proof, that there's that in Religion, and the Hopes it gives, to bear up the Mind under Troubles, and to fill it with exceeding Joy in the sharpest Trials, which can be had upon no other Principle.

AND when these Things are so, Why are we trifling! Why are we so careless about this Matter? Why do we suffer the poor, the mean Affairs of the present Life, to ingross our Time, our Thoughts, our Pains, and hinder us from seeking after the good Hopes of the Fulness of Joy, the everlasting Pleasures there are in Christ's Presence.

NOT to speak to the profane Herd of Atheists, who, notwithstanding their vain Boasts of excelling their Fellow-Creatures in their Freedom of Thinking, rather than meet with any Disturbance in the Gratification

nification of their sensual Appetites, would fain persuade themselves, that within a few Years, at most, they shall stand but on the Level with the Beasts that perish; but to address my self to such as profess to believe, that there is a Life after this, a Judgment to come, a Heaven, and a Hell, What is it that you are doing? You, who are without the Hopes we have been speaking of; and you, who are not giving Diligence to secure them. What Business is there of equal Importance with this, and so deserving of your Thoughts, and Care! Should not this, in all Reason, be minded in the first and chief Place! Are Delays in this Matter, or is an Indifference, a Trifling about it, consistent with your Professions! Shou'd you not, with the utmost Importunity, be crying Night and Day unto God, "Lord, convince me of my Sin and Misery; lead me to Christ; help me to believe on him; make me one of thy willing People, in the Day of thy Power, and give me to see the Work of thy Grace on my Soul, that I may be assured, that when absent from the Body I shall be present with the Lord. These Prayers should be accompanied with serious Resolutions to resist, with God's Help, the various Temptations to Sin that we may meet with; to be diligent in attending on the Ministry of the Word; frequent and serious in reading it; to be daily meditating on those Subjects that tend to keep alive in our Souls a Concern for our future Happiness, and to quicken us to our Duty, and readily to comply with the Divine Spirit in all his Motions to every Thing that is good. As many as walk according to these Rules, may look for these Hopes; and O! how much does the Pleasure and Comfort of the present Life, depend on our having them? When it is thus with us we go on our Way rejoicing.

WHAT Reason, therefore, have they, for the highest Thankfulness and Praise, who are in this blessed Condition! What great Things has God done for their Souls! How shou'd they admire the Riches of his

his Grace? Is it thus with any of you? Can you say, and upon good Grounds, it will be well with us in another State, "When absent from the Body, we shall be present with the Lord." What Encouragement have you to hold on in the Ways of Religion, notwithstanding all the Trials, all the Difficulties, you may meet with? How diligent shou'd you be in God's Service; how concern'd to grow in Grace; how careful to abound more and more in every good Word and Work, that when Sicknes comes, you may have the same Hopes, the same Comfort, that when Death draws near, you may be rejoicing in the Prospect of your approaching Happiness. And that, *so an Entrance may be minister'd unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Amen.

Reverend Dr. F. O. B. B.

[Redacted line]

[Redacted line]

CHARLES, you say, I am a King.

I find more.

O! why that flood of tears, that deep, that rising sigh!
O, my CHARLES, I have not my Obedience
To grow truly, and truly to love
She's gone, indeed: But whence, whence, but how?
O, think of these, and to your Sovereign bow.

CHA

E

A

P O E M

On the DEATH of

Mrs. FRANCES LOBB,

Late WIFE of the

Reverend Dr. LOBB.

LINDAMOUR. CHARISSA.

CHARISSA.

SHE's gone, you say! Ah, *Lindamour!*

LINDAMOUR.

O! why
That Flood of Tears; that deep, that piercing Sigh!
O, my CHARISSA, suffer not thy Grief
To grow unruly, and refuse Relief.
She's gone, indeed: But whither? whence? but how?
O, think of these, and to your Sovereign bow.

CHA

Your poor CHARISSA's Sorrows you mistake,
If such, you think, the Language is, they speak;
Far be the Thought, that I shou'd e'er complain
Of what I know is dear *Labefa's* Gain.
Far be the Thought, that I shou'd e'er repine
At her Great Father's Will, which shou'd be mine;
But this I thought; if she, bless'd Soul, be gone,
That poor *Philotheus* then is left alone.

If Heaven, my LINDAMOUR, shou'd summon you,
And you shou'd leave your sad CHARISSA too;
You, the dear Partner of my Joys and Gares,
The tender Sharer of my Hopes and Fears;
You, on whose Bosom I can now recline,
Less'ning my Griefs, by mingling them with thine;
If *Jesus*, LINDAMOUR, resolv'd on thee,
And fix'd to execute the just Decree,
You, my dear Monitor, my Guide, my Friend,
My better Self, shou'd from my Bosom rend;
Think you, tho' I must to the Sovereign bow,
The Saviour wou'd not some few Tears allow;
Some Grief to think, that, LINDAMOUR, thy Charms
Are ravish'd from CHARISSA's widow'd Arms?

To thee, dear *Jesus*, all the Praise I give,
That still thou suffer'st LINDAMOUR to live.
O! may we both united Hand and Heart,
Speed on a heavenly Course, till we must also part.

And shall we then with unaffected Eyes,
Think on th' Affliction that *Philotheus* tries?
Set undisturb'd, whilst we behold him left,
Like the sad Turtle, to his Mate bereft?
And see him mourn in every Scene of Life
The bitter Absence of his tender'st Wife?

Or hear the Accents of awaken'd Grief,
Too strong to yield, or listen to Relief?

Methinks I hear him, Stranger now to Ease,
Vent out his Sorrows in such Strains as these.

" Oh, She is gone, and left me here alone,
" O'erwhelm'd with Woe, her Absence to bemoan!
" Gone, LINDAMOUR! CHARISSA, gone! O, why
" Was my *Labefa* taken, and not I?
" Why was she torn, and ravish'd from my Heart?
" Why did we not together both depart?
" But, Peace, my ruffled Soul; I wou'd, I must,
" I do acknowledge, Lord, the SENTENCE just.
" Yet, Oh! 'Tis hard, when ev'ry Thought unites,
" And to indulge the bitter Grief invites;
" Believe me, hard to check the rising Pain,
" Submit, be quiet, and sedate remain.
" Where-e'er I am, which Way soe'er I stir,
" Still to my Thoughts the *Image* does recur.
" Oft as to thee, my Saviour, I repair,
" Something, alas! is whispering in my Ear,
" Where's thy *Labefa*, now, to join the Prayer?
" When to thy House, I, from my Grievs, retreat,
" In hopes thy chearing Presence there to meet,
" Where's my *Labefa*, now, to fill her wonted Seat?
" While with some happy Few, that love their Lord,
" T'extol his Greatness, and his Works record,
" I loose my Sorrows in devout Employ,
" How soon *Labefa* interrupts the Joy?
" Were she amidst us, how she'd help the Theme
" With some new Honours to her Saviour's Name,
" And make this World a Heaven terrestrial seem?
" But O, vain Thought! then o'er my labouring Soul
" Billows of Sorrows unresisted roll.
" Unhappy me! Ev'n when my Thoughts would trace
" The Paths that lie within the Fields of Grace;

" Wou'd

" Wou'd view the Wonders of Redeeming Love,
 " And in the View mount to the Seats above;
 " No ill-tim'd Business, Company, or Noise,
 " Attending near me to disturb my Joys;
 " Tho' my *Labefa* yonder too I see,
 " Of that bless'd Country made for ever free,
 " My Thoughts grow weary, and their Motion flow,
 " While I, without her, languish here below.
 " O! with what Eyes can I the Scenes review,
 " That shall the sad Remembrance still renew;
 " How the best Drugs, without Success, are try'd,
 " Study and wise Experience can provide:
 " How the poor Sufferer, labouring lies for Breath,
 " While Sobs preface, and feeble Pulse beat Death;
 " And the fond Husband standing by aghast,
 " Sighs deep, and dreads each Breath will be her last.

Thus would'st thou mourn, dear LINDAMOUR, for me,
 For, sure I am, CHARISSA would for thee.

And can we then, we, who th' Affliction share,
 Meet Sorrows, such as these, without a Tear?
 But say, my LINDAMOUR, what Thoughts can ease
 The pointed Sting, such Accents give us these?

LINDAMOUR,
 Had I been guarded with a Heart of Steel,
 That I might no more tender Passions feel,
 The moving Strokes thy Love and Language give
 Would make me deep Impressions to receive.
 But, Oh! CHARISSA, e'er I saw thy Tears,
 Or felt thy Griefs, but by presaging Fears;
 When first I heard just Heaven had hence remov'd
 The dear *Labefa*, we so justly lov'd,
 Full well I felt the Sorrows you renew;
 Griev'd for my Self, *Philothous*, and for You.
 But, Thanks to thee, kind Jesus, tho' the Gain
 Be chiefly *Hers*, tho' *Ours* be all the Pain,
 Yet is it high Injustice to complain.

Ev'n poor *Philoteus* himself may bless
 The awful Hand, that brought the sad Distress.
 Ask you the Thoughts, *CHARISSA*, that can ease
 The pointed Stings, such Accents give as these,
 These of *Philoteus*; O! they crowd apace,
 Big with Surprise and Comfort, big with Grace.
 Suspend your Griefs, and be your Looks serene,
 While you attend to the delightful Scene.

When Death, the King of Terrors, did appear,
 And brandish'd in his Hand his fatal Spear,
 Then stalk'd along the Room with horrid Grace,
 Approach'd her Bed, and star'd her in the Face,
Labefa, who undaunted, Silence broke,
 In Words like these the grisly Form bespoke.

"Tho' mighty Monarchs tremble at thy Sight,
 Yet I can meet thee, Tyrant, with Delight;
 "I, a weak Woman, fearless of thy Spite.
 "True, once I fear'd thee, and was then thy Slave;
 "But Hell 'twas made thee dreadful, not the Grave.
 "When fill'd with Horror, frighten'd with my Sin,
 "I ponder'd what a Rebel I had been;
 "Been to my kindest Lord, that gave me Breath,
 "And well I might, O then I fear'd thee, Death!
 "When Thou and I shall presently engage,
 "Exert thy Malice, and thy utmost Rage,
 "In vain thou'lt try to match the cutting Pain
 "My Soul endur'd, e'er I was born again.
 "But now advance, and all thy Terrors bring,
 "Tyrant, I know, they've lost their venom'd Sting.
 "Long e'er this Hour, in answer to my Tears,
 "My tender Saviour banish'd all my Fears;
 "Shew me my Title, O the dear Surprise!
 "To Realms beyond thy reach, in yonder Skies.
 "What sayest thou, Death! know, thou must have a
 "In fixing my glad Soul for ever there. (share

"What

(Breast)
 " What Thoughts are these now springing in my
 " That wou'd retract the Triumph I've confess'd?
 " Hah, Tempter! what, must then your Forces join,
 " And *Hell* with *Death* to ruin me combine?
 " O, tell me, Lord, is't *Satan* speaks, or *Thou*?
 " Feign wou'd I only to my *Sovereign* bow.
 " Say, have I by an ill-tim'd groundless Claim,
 " Injur'd thy Word, thy Promises, thy Name?
 " Too many have, and found, alas! at last,
 " Too late, the dismal Issues of their Haste,
 " *Jesus*, I thank thee. *Satan*, 'twas thy Voice, Joys:
 " That thus wou'd cloud my Hopes and dissipate my
 " Nature and Thou cou'd never teach my Heart
 " To quit its Idols, with its Lusts to part;
 " From its old Bondage set the Captive free,
 " And turn its Bent from *Sin*, the *World*, and *Thee*.
 " Should'st Thou, my *Jesus*, to my Soul address,
 " And bid *Lebese* all her Love confess;
 " O! I cou'd gladly to thy Self appeal,
 " Words are too weak to tell the Love I feel,
 " Thee, *Jesus*, have I chosen: and I own my Choice,
 " The Author, Spring and Center, of my Joys:
 " Thee, *sacred Prophet*, to direct my Way,
 " From midnight Darkness to meridian Day:
 " Thee, *glorious Priest*, to purchase by thy Blood
 " My *Pardon* seal'd, and a *propitious God*:
 " Thee, *mighty King*, to sway my stubborn Soul,
 " That I thy Pleasure may not dare controul:
 " Thee, *Jesus*, Thee, ten Thousand Times I've chose;
 " Such was my Love, and still the Passion grows.
 " But which of us to Love did first incline?
 " Thou, Thou, my Lord; 'twas thy Love kindled mine.
 " *Satan*, be gone, I now defy thy Pride,
 " *Jesus*, my Lord, engages on my Side.
 " While from my *Christ* I turn, indeed, and view
 " Myself alone, full well, alas! I know,
 " The *Nothing* that I am, the *Nothing* I can do.
 " But

" But when again, Thee, *Jesus*, I embrace,
 " And see each Feature of thy lovely Face,
 " Full Treasures I behold of unexhausted Grace.
 " Here, here, I fix, on this blest'd Hope rely ;
 " On thee I'll lean, support me whilst I die."
 Thou wilt, *she said*, and down the Gauntlet throws,
 Defying Death and all her hellish Foes.

The threat'ning Tyrant in his ghastly Airs
 Stung by the Insult on *Labefa*, stares;
 Then thus :

" Think'st thou, weak Woman, thou canst me with-
 " Who rule the World with uncontroll'd Command ?
 " Me, whom whole Cities, and whole Realms revere,
 " And shudder with Affright where I appear ?
 " What Hero yet presum'd my Arms to meet,
 " And did not fall a Victim at my Feet ?
 " Know, since thou dar'st me, I'll thy Pride subdue,
 " And make thee, Woman, thy Presumption rue.
 " I'll rack thy Body with tormenting Pain,
 " And in thy Blood my conquering Spear distain.
 " The young Dependants that around thee stand,
 " Shall wish in vain for thy assisting Hand.
 " The Friends, that love thy Converse now, in vain
 " Of thy long Absence quickly shall complain :
 " Thy dearest Kindred, and thou lov'st them all,
 " In vain, anon, shall for *Labefa* call.
 " Not thy *Philothous* shall prolong thy Day,
 " From him, hear that, I'll ravish thee away.
 " But if these Batteries move thee not, and still
 " Thou breathest bold Defiance to my Will,
 " Know, Woman, to subdue thy stubborn Pride,
 " When from thy Soul thy Body I divide,
 " All the long Ages of my future Reign
 " Thy captive Frame my Prisoner shall remain :
 " Banish'd from Heaven, and Thee, I'll keep the Slave
 " Confin'd in Dust, to Darkness and the Grave.

The

The Tyrant ceas'd, unable to assuage
His fullen Pride, and disappointed Rage;
For thus *Labes* undisturb'd replies,
And still his furious Menaces defies.

"Boast of the dreadful Ravage thou hast made,
"The Kings by thee destroy'd, the Realms dismay'd:
"Tell o'er thy Laurels, all thy Trophies count;
"Tell, how their Number does the Stars surmount:
"But speak this, Tyrant, where thy Rage is fear'd,
"And threaten, where thy Threats will be rever'd:
"To me alike they're impotent, and vain,
"They raise no Passion in me but Disdain.
"Shure thou forgett'st, O Death, the mighty King,
"That grappling with thee forc'd away thy Sting,
"And made thee, to his Friends, an harmless Thing.
"Thou hop'dst to awe me with thy Threats of Pain,
"But now I feel them, Do I once complain?
"Tell me no more, to fright me with Dismay,
"From all I love thou'lt ravish me away;
"Death, I can leave them; gladly leave them All,
"Ev'n thee, *Philothous*, at my Saviour's Call.

"Hear me, *Philothous*, hear me, every Friend,
"That prays his Warfare may in Triumph end:
"The welcome Period now at length is come,
"And I am hast'ning to my long'd for Home,
"In vain my Passage, Hell, and Sin oppose:
"The Cowards both are now my vanquish'd Foes.
"Death, that wou'd hinder, must assist my Flight
"To yonder glorious Mansions of Delight.
"Forgive me, Friends, and my *Philothous* too,
"Fearless of What, or Death, or Hell, can do,
"Much as you love me, I'm afraid of you.
"Just at the Harbour of my long'd for Rest
"I'm now arriv'd; Joy fills my eas'd Breast.

" And can you wish to see me driven again,
 " By the rude Storms, into the angry Main?
 " Cease then those Prayers, that interrupt my Speed,
 " And let *Labefa* undisturb'd proceed.
 " Go, humble Suitors, with united Mind;
 " Go, beg your Wills may humbly be resign'd.
 " Go, my *Philotheus*; Why dost Thou delay?
 " O, stop those Sighs! O, wipe those Tears away.
 " Thy just Submission in thy Eyes I read,
 " Thine, Jesus, be the Praise, my Witnesses all succeed.
 " Farewel, my Friends, *Philotheus* adieu,
 " Jesus and Death, I turn me now to you.
 " Jesus, my Lord, my Saviour, and my All,
 " When wilt Thou come; when give the welcome Call?
 " But Peace, my Soul; 'tis sitting I shou'd stay,
 " And wait the Secret, but the Certain Day.
 " But see, he comes, my long-wish'd Lord appears,
 " Sorrows be gone; gone hence for ever Tears.
 " Jesus approaches; Tyrant, do thy worst:
 " Do what thou threat'nest; crumble me to Dust:
 " Scatter my Ashes o'er the floating Main;
 " Bid me, insulting, gather them again.
 " I fear thee not, in spite of thee, these Eyes
 " Shall see my Lord, e'er long, with glad Surprise,
 " And by His great Command again this Body rise. }
 " Welcome, my Jesus, my victorious King,
 " Welcome the dear Salvation Thou dost bring.
 " O! help me, Friends; *Philotheus*, help me raise
 " A just Memorial to the Saviour's Praise.
 " But hark! I'm call'd; behold, my Lord, I come,
 " Farewel, my Friends; ye Angels bear me home.
 " So spake *Labefa*, constant to the End;
 " And Death the Tyrant now becomes the Friend;
 " For now compell'd to own his vanquish'd Pride,
 " He only gently touch'd her, and she died.

The bright Spectators, ravish'd with the Sight,
 Confess the Victor, and applaud the Fight:
 Then high they mount, and bear her thro' the Skies,
 Chanting bless'd Hallelujahs as they rise.

Say now, CHARISSA, is here not Relief
 Against th' Excess of ev'n *Philothus's* Grief?
 Can You, or He, now comfortless, deplore
 The mournful Thought, *Labesa's here no more?*
 Cou'd You, or, think You, cou'd *Philothus* hear
 Such heavenly Triumphs with reluctant Ear?
 Instead of Sully'g by our ill-tim'd Grief
 The Honours of the Saint, the Honours of her Chief,
 Let's talk the Conquests our *Labesa* won;
 Tell whither, whence, and how, the Conqueror's gone.
 As she did ever, bear before our Eyes
 The War, the Chief, the Victory, the Prize,
 Speed on her Course, and all her Steps pursue,
 Till we the Tyrant meet, and come off Victors too.

F I N I S.

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